

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 166. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1872.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE WICKED WOODS OF TOBEREEVIL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HESTER'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER XVI. MRS. LEE INSISTS UPON TELLING HER STORY.

MAY soon found herself domesticated pleasantly enough with the inmates of the Castle of Camlough. Just at first she felt somewhat oppressed by attentions; from Lady Archbold, who prided herself on being an excellent hostess; from Sir John, who was desirous that his special guest should not find herself neglected; from Mrs. Lee, who looked upon this girl as a windfall which Fate had sent to herself; from Katherine, who was resolved to dazzle and to patronise; and from Christopher, who was bent upon pleasing his love. May accepted the treatment as quietly as though she had been used to it all her life, but once or twice she got tired of being asked if she were sure she would rather go out than remain in-doors, if she were quite sure she would not like this chair better than that sofa, and if she were very sure indeed that she would not prefer another game of chess before going to bed. It crossed her mind that things were pleasanter at home at Monasterlea, where people came and went as they liked, without questioning or ceremony. Very soon, however, she fitted herself to the place; and the people got used to her, and gave her peace.

The castle was built in wings, which formed three sides of a square, enclosing a flowery court-yard, with a fountain in the middle. The wide slanting steps up to the entrance were flanked by a balustrading round which the cactus twined and burned, as strong and as brilliant as though it had

been in a hot-house. The wings of the house were each finished by an ivied turret, and all the lower windows peeped out of a thick mat of ivy. On the outer side of the wings a massive balcony, the favourite lounging place of the people of the castle, ran round the upper windows, commanding a charming view of down-hill gardens with a river at their foot, a rustic bridge, a mazy glen, a misty wooded hollow lying deep under the shadow of the rising of the mountains.

Mrs. Lee had taken possession of May as her own property since their first meeting on the mountain. She had chosen her a place by her own side at the dinner-table, chiefly addressed her conversation to her, and after dinner, until the moment when she, Mrs. Lee, fell asleep in her easy-chair, related to her the principal events of her life. Mrs. Lee in the drawing-room was not so alarming a person as Mrs. Lee lost on the heather, but in a brown velvet robe and scarlet turban, she looked sufficiently imposing. Her sad looks at her son, and her bitter looks at Katherine, caused much amusement to May, who did not pity her in the least. If a mother could not be content with a bride like Miss Archbold for her son, why a mother ought not to be encouraged in her folly.

Some days passed before the storm of Mrs. Lee's full confidence broke, as had been threatened, upon May's devoted head. She had several times seen it coming, but had taken timely shelter under the wing of some third person. Mrs. Lee required leisure and privacy for her story, and though the people of the house could hardly be said to do anything all day, nor yet to be particularly sociable, still in their habits within doors there was little privacy or

leisure at Camlough. May was invited to join the lovers in all their walks and rides, and it often fell to her share to feel herself one too many. She learned a trick of letting her horse lag behind the others, and of losing herself in the dingles in quest of wild strawberries. Sometimes Sir John Archbold made a fourth in the rides, and paid her old-fashioned compliments, and told her of the new improvements which he meant to make about the place; a rustic bridge here, a plantation there; and May cheerfully studied the points of view, and faithfully gave him her opinion on these matters. But quite as often she was entirely left to her own reflections. This did not trouble her, for she had a vast love of beauty and a turn for noting character, and the new images that crowded her own mind made a constant entertainment for her from morning till night. The lovers were an unfailing source of delight to her. Her heart leaned towards them in quite a motherly fashion. She had read about lovers, but she had never beheld a real pair before. She followed in their wake, admiring, in her simplicity, what she conceived to be an example of the greatest happiness of life. She spent long dreamy days, thinking over the matter, down among the lilies and sedges under the bridge, or wandering through mazy and shimmering dingles. The world was very glorious, thought May, in her maiden meditation, and human life was very beautiful, and richly blest.

Mrs. Lee and May and Katherine were all lodged in the same wing of the castle. Their windows all opened out upon the great balcony. May was rather afraid to trust herself on the balcony alone, lest Mrs. Lee should loom forth and take possession of her. Mrs. Lee had a handsome sitting-room off her bedroom, and it often pleased her to spend the day in its solitude. May, a less important person, had only a pretty little dressing-room, furnished with writing-table, books, and pictures; but she, too, liked to spend an hour in her retreat. This sitting-room and this dressing-room adjoined one another, the wall between being but a partition. When Mrs. Lee heard May stirring in her nest, she was apt to leave her own and come knocking at May's door. When May heard Mrs. Lee leave her room, she was apt to fly to the balcony, and thence escape to the gardens. Upon the strength of many disappointments Mrs. Lee built a theory that the dressing-room was haunted. "My dear ma'am," she would confide to May, "I heard some one

move in it quite plainly; but when I entered there was nobody to be seen!" And May would answer slyly, "Indeed, madam, I don't believe it is haunted by anything more mischievous than myself!"

This was all very well, and for a time she kept the ponderous lady at a distance. The hour of her defeat was at hand, however, and one night she heard Mrs. Lee's gentle knock upon her bedroom door. For a moment May thought of making no answer, and pretending to be asleep. But "it would be quite useless," she decided the next moment, "for she would come in and wake me, I believe!"

"Mrs. Lee, I am just stepping into bed," was her answer. It was certainly true, for she had put out her light, and stood in her night-dress, in the moonlight, in the middle of the floor.

"My dear Miss May," came back to her through the keyhole, "you will not object to an old woman's sitting at your bedside for an hour?"

May saw that she was conquered. She opened her door and retreated to her bed, where Mrs. Lee followed her, and sat down before her like a nightmare. Mrs. Lee had on a large white nightcap, and even the moonlight had no power to make her look like a spirit of night or mysterious angel visitant.

"My dear," began Mrs. Lee, "I should not torment you with my complaints if I had any one else to go to for sympathy."

This was said in an accent of such real sadness that May gave up her impatience and became attentive.

"I'm very sorry if you are in trouble, Mrs. Lee," she said.

"Thank you, my dear," said Mrs. Lee, "and truly I am in sore trouble. Love has always been a mischief-maker, they say, but young men used sometimes to take advice from their mothers. My son used, but now he will not listen to a word that I speak. My dear, I want you to say a few words to the lady."

In the earnestness of Mrs. Lee's affliction she had forgotten the formality of her usual style of address. May's patience, however, was not proof against this speech. She sat up and spoke out her mind.

"Now, Mrs. Lee, I should like to show respect to all you say; but I find it very hard to pity what you seem to feel. I think nothing could be more fitting than the match, and as for your son, I think Miss Archbold only too good for him, if there be any difference between them."

"That's what she thinks herself, I dare say," said Mrs. Lee, beginning to weep; "and I do declare I believe there is no kind-heartedness left among young women now-a-days. But if she does think so, why does she not tell him so and send him away?"

"Send him away!" echoed May; "I don't understand you at all, Mrs. Lee."

"I see that plain enough, my dear, and I will tell you all about it. You think that Miss Archbold is going to marry my son?"

"Of course I think so," said May. "What else could I think?"

"What else, indeed? But she is not going to marry him, and she is going to ruin him for life."

"Oh no, I could not believe it."

"That will not alter the matter at all," said Mrs. Lee, crossly.

"That is true, but I mean—you know even were she capable——" May paused. "In that case, Mrs. Lee, she would not be worth thinking of. Your son would not be ruined for life, I dare say."

"You know nothing about the matter when you say so," retorted the distressed lady. "My dear ma'am, I came here to tell you the whole story. I suppose you have heard my son spoken of as a man of wealth?"

May admitted that she had heard him so spoken of.

"Well," said Mrs. Lee, grimly, "I have three hundred a year which my husband left me. It was all he had to leave." And he said, 'The child is a boy; let him work.'"

May was silent, not daring to ask if upon the reversion of his mother's three hundred pounds a year rested Christopher's sole claim to be considered a man of wealth.

"And so he should have been brought up to work, and he would have worked," went on Mrs. Lee, "if I had not had a brother who was a rich bachelor. He was an old man, and all his great wealth had never made him happy. He had been always called a woman-hater, but when he was dying he sent for me, and he made me some confession about his views of life. He said he believed a single life led to all sorts of folly and wickedness, and that he had been a miserable man because he had been so lonely. He had willed all his fortune to my son, on condition that he should marry before he was twenty-three. 'If a young man has any good in him,' said he,

'he has always fallen in love with some nice girl before that age. Let him marry her at once, and not wait till he has begun to think that she is not as handsome, or as clever, or as angelically tempered as he would like her to be. Most young men are prevented by want of money. He shall not be so prevented.' In this humour my brother made his will, and so, my dear ma'am, it happens that if Christopher be a married man before the last day of next September, he will be richer than most men in the kingdom. If he be not married by that time he will be poorer than any other poor young man by just this much, that he will not know how to work."

"And this is July," said May; "they ought to be getting ready for the wedding."

"There will be no wedding here," said the troubled lady.

"Oh, Mrs. Lee!"

"There is no wedding thought of, except in my son's poor bedazzled brains. I told you before that it was this girl's amusement to lead him on to his ruin. And I tell you so again."

"But does she know the circumstances, as you have told them to me?"

"I told them to her myself seven or eight months ago. She only laughed and said the old gentleman had made an exceedingly awkward arrangement."

"Perhaps she does not like to be tormented about the matter. She may choose to be a little mischievous, but I will not believe that she can be so wicked as you think."

"You don't know her as I know her. You have not seen her with other lovers around her, my dear. She was the centre of a crowd of them when we met her first, and she turned them off one by one, and seemed to delight in their vexation. At that time I thought Christopher would have married a sweet little girl, the daughter of his tutor in England. She was fond of him I am sure, and though she had not a penny, he need not care for that. But this Katherine put her clear out of his head."

"Would it not be well to appeal to her father and mother—I mean Sir John and Lady Archbold?" said May, now thoroughly roused to comprehend the situation, and feel interested in averting this threatened danger.

"I tried that before," said Mrs. Lee, gloomily, "but I might have saved my pains. I believe they are afraid to interfere with the

girl. They declared politely that they never could think of influencing their daughter's affections. As if I wanted them to do so! I asked for nothing but that she should make up her mind."

May began to share in the poor lady's dismay.

"So then I should have left this place in anger," said Mrs. Lee, "only for fear of making a quarrel, and destroying any hope that might be left. If the lady would marry my son I should be thankful, though, indeed, I do not like her. My poor boy loves her, and at all events his fortune would be secured. But if she turns him away now at the last moment, when he finds himself ruined and disappointed, he will fall into a despair which she with her light ways could scarcely even dream of. And things are no better to-day than they were weeks ago."

This conversation went on for some time longer, and during the course of it much of the heaviness and unsightliness of Mrs. Lee's outlines became softened away, and was never after visible to May's pitying eyes. These two new friends parted at last with an understanding that May should—if opportunity offered, make interest for Christopher, and plead his cause with Katherine. And after Mrs. Lee had gone away, May lay a long time still awake, wondering over the iniquity that had just been made known to her. She found it in the end too monstrous to be believed in.

Before she went to sleep she had persuaded herself that Katherine must come forth, triumphant in honesty, from under the cloud of this suspicion which was at present hanging over her.

CHAPTER XVII. KATHERINE SPEAKS HER MIND.

It was not long before May had an opportunity of learning Katherine's sentiments towards Christopher, as well as towards some other people and things.

One morning she was entertaining herself after her own fashion, alone, in the dingle beyond the rustic bridge over the stream. She was sitting in the shelter of a large oak, stringing the ripe rowan-berries into a long scarlet chain. So occupied she heard a rapid step, and a muttering voice coming over the little bridge, a crunching in the underwood close by, and then some one fell prone upon the moss at the foot of her tree; the other side of the tree at which she was sitting. This was Christopher Lee, in deep distress. He had broken the stately, fan-shaped ferns by the reckless-

ness with which he had flung himself down. His face was buried in the grass, and he was sobbing; and May could not move to go away and leave him, for the reason that he was lying upon her muslin skirt. She tried to draw it away without disturbing him, but this was impossible. He started at the movement and looked up.

"Oh, Mr. Lee, I am so sorry!" said May; "I could not help being here!"

He looked at her angrily for a moment, with a burning blush on his perturbed face. Then he laughed uncomfortably, and begged her pardon.

"I see I have spoiled your dress," he said, "but, of course, I did not do it intentionally. Of course, if I had seen you I should not have come here."

"It was very unlucky," said May, "at least if you mind it. But my dress has got no harm."

"Mind it?" he said. "Of course I mind that you should have caught me lamenting like a woman. But I trust myself to your charity; and believe me I have reason for grief. At least I think I have," he added slowly, passing his hand over his face. "I may be foolishly wrong, and if so I will come and tell you, some day soon, of my happiness. I dare not describe to you what that happiness would be like. But I think that I have reason for grief."

"I hope with all my heart that you are wrong," said May, "and that you may get your happiness. If you don't—"

"Well, if I don't?"

"I was going to say something which I had better not say," said May. "You would perhaps think me impertinent and interfering."

"Perhaps I should," said Christopher, reflecting, "and that would be unfair. I will not ask you to say another word. Good morning, Miss Mourne; I am going a little further down the stream to fish."

And so he walked off, forgetting that, in order to fish, it is necessary to have a rod, or some other apparatus for the purpose. But May was a gentle critic, and would not have laughed at him for the world.

After that May dropped her brilliant chain from the bridge, and watched it floating down the stream. Then she turned away, and walked up the hilly garden towards the castle. Katherine was leaning over the balcony, alone. She had been looking down towards the dingle and could see a long way. May mounted the balcony and approached her, seeing that, as she

drew near, Katherine looked expectant, and ready for conversation. This was unusual, but it was what May desired. She was too much disturbed by the mistakes of her neighbours to be at peace with her own thoughts. She was full of indignation against somebody. Who that somebody might be it behoved her to find out, that she might not in the zeal of her fancy make a martyr of the innocent.

"Stay here a little," said Katherine, winningly, as May hesitated, not knowing whether to pass her or remain unbidden at her side. And May seated herself on the edge of the balcony, leaning back against an urn full of geraniums; folded her hands in her lap, and expected to be catechised.

"You have been walking with Mr. Lee?" said Katherine, not rudely, but with the air of one who considered she had a right to ask questions. "Where have you left him?"

"He said he would go further up the river to fish," said May, demurely.

"Oh!" Katherine looked surprised and a little disappointed. She had perhaps expected some pitiful tale of her lover's desperation.

"You were walking with him some time?" she asked again, after a minute, during which she had been eyeing May, who sat with her dark head against the geraniums, her eyes half shut, gazing drowsily down through the sunshine to the river, the way by which Christopher had gone.

"Not walking," said May; "sitting and standing."

"Oh!" said Katherine, impatiently, "and talking, of course. He was complaining to you of me all the time?"

"No," said May, mischievously, "we never even mentioned your name."

"I am glad to hear it, I am sure," said Katherine, with a mortified smile. "But I had thought it might be otherwise, knowing his habit. He is a dreadfully low-spirited young man. I am tired to death of him. I wish they would go away."

"Then why do you not tell him so, and send him away at once?" asked May, rousing up so suddenly, and speaking with such energy that she quite startled Katherine. "You know—you know it is you who keep him here."

May trembled while she spoke, believing that Katherine would think her interference quite outrageous. But Katherine's uneasiness all vanished at the attack. Her face kindled with smiles.

"My dear little girl," she said, indul-

gently, "you don't know what you are saying. Lovers will not be shaken off so easily. I speak from much experience. While you—you have never had a lover, have you?" said she, looking at May, keenly.

"No, indeed!" said May, hastily, and blushing a vivid blush, that wandered from her cheeks to her forehead, creeping up even among the little rings of her hair. She felt vexed with herself for blushing, for she knew of no reason why the question should annoy her. And there was Katherine looking on with amused curiosity.

"How red you turn!" said Katherine, who had never blushed, save with anger, in her life. "But you need not be ashamed. It is no reproach at all, living out of the world as you do."

"I am not ashamed," said May, and I do not wish for a lover. But I think I can understand how a man ought to be treated by a woman whom he loves—for whom he is willing to give up everything in the world."

"Do you indeed? So you have studied the matter. Come, now, tell me all about it," said Katherine, looking delighted.

"He ought not to be encouraged, and then left to break his heart," said May, with another subtle quiver of excitement dyeing her cheeks. "Even if——"

"Even if what?" asked Katherine.

"Miss Archbold, I am afraid I shall make you very angry."

"No such thing," said Katherine; "I am accustomed to hear dirges about broken hearts. You are not such an original person as you think. And your enthusiasm about lovers' rights is exceedingly amusing. Go on with that speech which you were afraid would overwhelm me."

"I was going to say your conduct would be cruel to Mr. Lee, even if his fortune as well as his happiness were not so entirely at your mercy."

"So you have picked out that story already," said Katherine, looking right well pleased.

"I picked out nothing," said May, indignantly.

"Well, let that be. We cannot help the truth getting about. But, my simple maiden, how am I to blame if people will make a mess of their family arrangements? If a man chooses to lose a fortune for my sake, how am I to prevent his being so silly? If I had been his mother I should have brought him up better. The world

will talk about it, and will call me a monster. But they ought rather to cry out on him for a fool. As for encouragement, how am I to judge of a lover unless I have proper time? People ought to be capable of taking care of their own affairs. If a person sees a risk, why not turn upon his heel and go another way? Now if a man were to show spirit, and prove manfully rebellious——"

"Well," asked May, "what would happen then?"

"Why then I should think him worth a little pains. I have no mercy on a fool."

"Poor Mr. Lee!" said May. "And have all your lovers been fools, Miss Archbold?"

"All," said Katherine, "or at least I have found it easy to make them fools for the time." Katherine had warmed wonderfully with her subject as she went on. It was evidently one upon which she loved to discourse. "There is just one person," she continued, "whom I have thought worth an effort; for whose sake I could acknowledge that my heart is not made of flint. While such a one lives," here her lip curled, "I have no pity for such simpletons as Christopher Lee!"

"Have you told Mr. Lee of the existence of this person?" asked May, gravely, after some rueful reflections upon Christopher's hard fate.

Katherine laughed gaily. "You amusing little goody!" she said, blithely, "do you think that I also am a fool? I have been frank enough with you, but you don't suppose it is my habit to carry my heart upon my sleeve?"

"Was this person rebellious?" asked May, rushing into another question to avoid the opportunity of declaring what she thought about Miss Archbold, and her habitual line of conduct.

"Not quite," said Katherine, with an air of mystery; "but he looked as if he could be. You will see him, I have no doubt, by-and-bye." Here the young lady suddenly became thoroughly confidential. "The first time we met was on board ship, when we were returning from our travels, quite a short time ago. We were coming from Calais to Dover, and there was a storm, and people were frightened. Everybody behaved like a fool, including mamma and papa, who were both ill. He took care of us all, and, as I had fully expected, he made himself my devoted attendant. Towards the end of the passage the wind fell, and all the stars came out. Nothing could be more favourable to a romantic im-

pression, and we had some hours of charming conversation. Mamma gave him our cards, and he came to us in London. There is no doubt that we shall see him here soon. He belongs to this country, and his history is quite interesting. He has been some years abroad, and is coming to visit his inheritance for the first time. He was reserved about himself, but we heard all his story from a friend of his father's. Mamma does not quite approve of him, for the old man may live a long time, and is not very reputable. Still, he must die. And the nephew will be quite a millionaire."

"Who is this gentleman?" asked May, suddenly. "What is his name?"

"Did I not mention? I thought you knew. He is Paul Finiston, handsome and proud, and they say he is a poet. One could see it in his eyes that night on board the ship. He had a way of folding his arms and seeming to forget everything and everybody, himself as well as the rest. This was, of course, when the danger was over, and there was nothing more to be done. It piqued my vanity at first, but I soon saw that though a gentleman, indeed, it was evident that he had not been accustomed to the ways of polite society. It is little things like this that made me say he might be inclined to be rebellious. But dear me, Miss Mournie, how white you are grown!"

"Am I?" said May, "never mind. Tell me something more about Paul Finiston."

"Do you know him?" asked Katherine, sharply.

"I cannot say that," said May, "for I left my Paul Finiston in Dublin a great many years ago. I have no acquaintance with your admirer, Miss Archbold."

"Your Paul Finiston?" said Katherine, with a sudden elevation of her handsome chin.

"Forgive me if I speak awkwardly," said May; "I mean the Paul Finiston with whom I had some acquaintance."

This was said with dignity, and Katherine was at a loss how fitly to express her displeasure. But fitly or unfitly, her sense of May's audacity must be made known to the offender.

"And with whom you hope to renew your acquaintance," she said, bluntly, and with a look and a tone that made May again turn pale.

"Do not speak to me like that," said the young girl quickly. "I shall be glad if you will talk upon some other subject."

"But I will not drop the subject," said

Katherine, stormily, her eyes beginning to burn and her face to grow dark. "I will not quit it till we understand each other perfectly. You have drawn from me a confidence."

"Pardon!" said May. "You volunteered it."

"I repeat that you drew it from me," said Katherine, "with your sentimental looks and your sympathetic speeches about lovers. Now I may as well go further. And I warn you not to meddle between me and Paul Finiston!"

"I?" exclaimed May, springing to her feet and standing a little off from Katherine, straight and quivering as a very shaft of fire.

"Yes, you," said Katherine. "You have thought of him as a lover. I saw it in your face when I first mentioned his name."

"It is false," said May, in a low thrilling voice. "How dare you accuse me? You, who know nothing of me!"

But Katherine was not softened by the sight of May's honest indignation as she stood panting before her, her eyes like dark flames, her cheeks redder than the reddest roses round about.

"Your enthusiastic modesty is very pretty," sneered Katherine. "But I am not deceived by it. I see that you——"

But here May suddenly put her fingers in her ears with a childish impulse of passionate impatience. Katherine stood speechless at finding herself treated with such utter disrespect. And before she could find words to express her sense of the indignity, May had turned away and fled through the window into her room.

"But I will not be treated so!" cried Katherine at the window. "Come out, Miss Mourne, for I have not done speaking to you. Or else I shall go in——"

But in the twinkling of an eye the window was locked inside, the shutters closed and barred. And May, having thus ended the battle, sat down upon the floor in the dark, and had a hearty cry.

ANDREW DUCROW.

In the later half of the last century there was born at Bruges a certain Peter Von Ducrow, who, arrived at manhood, earned for himself the title of the Flemish Hercules. He was by profession and by natural endowment a "strong man:" gaining his living by public exhibition of his physical gifts. His performances certainly seem

to have been of a prodigious character. He could hold between his teeth, and in such way lift from the ground, a table upon which had been stationed four or five of his children. Lying upon his back, he could with his hands and feet support a platform upon which stood no less than eighteen grenadiers fully armed and in marching order. From the first Hercules downwards, a peculiar mythical halo has, no doubt, always attended and enhanced the proceedings of the strong. But these exploits, and such as these, are stated to have been duly accomplished by Peter in the ring of Astley's Amphitheatre during the early seasons of that establishment.

For the "strong man" had journeyed to London. Within a week of his arrival, in the year 1793, there was born to him a son, who was christened Andrew. It was afterwards deemed appropriate enough that little Andrew Ducrow should have first drawn breath at the Nag's Head Inn, Southwark.

The child was educated perhaps much as "strong men's" children usually are. Great regard was paid to his muscles; his mind was left to take care of itself. It is the acrobat's creed that reading and writing come by nature; but that the feats of the circle can only result from severe training. At three years old Andrew was set to learn his father's trade. From standing firmly with his feet in a straight line, heel to heel, he proceeded to vaulting, tumbling, dancing on the slack and tight rope—with, by way of relief and recreation, balancing, riding, fencing, and boxing. At the age of seven he was sufficiently accomplished to take part in a fête given at Frogmore, in the presence of George the Third. In the course of the performance, much to the alarm of the spectators, the stage gave way, and the little fellow fell through. The king, much concerned at the accident, was charmed by the fortitude with which the young performer bore his bruises, and the simplicity with which he denied that he had been at all hurt.

"What any man has done or can do, I'll do," old Ducrow was wont to say, "but my boy shall do what no one else can or dare do." He referred, of course, to the feats of his profession. He was the severest of disciplinarians, and regarded failure as a matter quite within the control of the performer. He was himself without fear, and he declined to recognise the existence of such a feeling. "In ninety-nine cases out

of a hundred," he would say, "I can't" simply means 'I won't.'" Diligent application of the horsewhip he had invariably found to be a most complete cure for timidity. Young Ducrow went through his performances with an understanding that any mistake that he might make, or any accident that might happen, would be promptly followed by bodily chastisement of a most merciless kind. At Edinburgh, when a mere child, he fell from his rope and dislocated his wrist; he continued to dance, however, carrying his balancing-pole in one hand. He fell again and sprained his ankle; but he went through the remainder of his performances on one leg. From the strictness of his early training he acquired the coolness and courage which so distinguished his after-career; and certainly his preceptor set him a good example in the way of hardihood. A critic wrote of Peter Ducrow's daring: "He would have danced on a rope stretched across the crater of Vesuvius during an eruption, or have ridden round the ridge of Ararat in a whirlwind!"

In 1808, young Ducrow was chief equestrian and rope-dancer at Astley's, enjoying a salary of ten pounds per week. Five years later, the Ducrows seceded to the rival establishment, the Royal Circus, in St. George's Fields. Here a stage had been erected, and dramatic entertainments were presented. It was in the part of Florio the dumb boy, in the Dog of Montargis, that Andrew first won applause as a pantomimist. Misfortunes, however, came thickly upon the Royal Circus, bankruptcy afflicted the proprietors, the license was forfeited, and the doors of the theatre were closed. Andrew returned to Astley's for a season, and introduced that serious acting upon horseback for which he afterwards became so famous. Already his classical scene of the Gladiator was an admired performance. His bold riding, personal graces, and mastery of the language of gestures, were attracting great attention.

About this time Peter Ducrow died, leaving his widow and family to the charge of Andrew. Astley's was then under the management of one Davis, whose son was a leading performer in the ring. Andrew finding the rivalry of the manager's son somewhat inconvenient, resolved upon a continental tour. Accompanied by his brothers and sisters, and taking with him his famous trick-horse Jack, he joined Blondell's Cirque Olympique, and made his first appearance in Ghent. Subsequently he visited

the chief towns of France. His success was something unprecedented. A tempting offer to share the receipts of the night, after an allowance of three hundred francs for expenses, brought him to Franconi's circus, at Paris. The surpassing merits of the English horseman were speedily recognised, and he secured unbounded popularity. His style was pronounced original, his daring unequalled. He was the first to introduce into the ring an equestrian pageant or entrée, and his performances upon six "bare-backed steeds"—as in his famous scene, the Courier of St. Petersburg—had not previously been attempted.

"Animated, light, and graceful," wrote enthusiastically a Parisian critic, "the English horseman seduces and enchants us by his elegant agility. He absolutely sports with the rules of statics, and gravity has no central point for him. Sometimes like an aerial being you would suppose him ready to take an easy flight. Sometimes stooping over the arena he remains suspended in space, a prodigy of equilibrium. His rapid courser is the pedestal on which he erects every form and assumes every attitude: the Mercury of Phidias, ready to take wing; the Gladiator of admirable proportions; the lover of Flora with Cupid in his arms or disporting in a garland of flowers."

Another critic took up the theme: "To these prodigies of agility and address is united a grace which constitutes their highest merit in the eyes of all who entertain a proper sense of the genuine principles of art, and who know that in feats of dexterity, and even of strength, the chief merit does not lie in the surmounting of difficulty. But what exalts the exercises of M. Ducrow to the honourable rank of the imitative art, are the scenes, I might almost say the dramas, which he performs in mute language. The truth, the animation, all, in short, which comprehends the beauty of pantomime, are rendered still more astonishing by being exhibited, as it were, in the air, and in the midst of that rapid motion which hurries along both the courser and his guide. Here, indeed, the difficulty overcome renders the perfection of talent still more admirable. And M. Ducrow has unfolded a new talent. Having shown himself the most skilful equestrian we have ever seen, a charming dancer and excellent mimic, he has now appeared as a worthy rival of Madame Sacqui, Revel, Forioso, Cabanel, and all the boldest funambulists we ever beheld."

At this time, it may be observed, the

natural laws which govern many of the feats of the circus were not very generally apprehended. Much marvelling attended the fact that the horse, greatly inclining inward as he galloped round, yet did not fall into the ring, and that the horseman, however high he leapt into the air, alighted nevertheless upon his steed's back. Every one now is informed as to those ruling mechanical forces, the centrifugal and the centripetal. And it is common enough knowledge in these times that the motion of the horse is communicated to his rider, and that, leaping, he is propelled forward at the same time as many paces as his horse has advanced. In this way the balls tossed up by the equestrian juggler fall back as certainly into the cups, as though the performance had been presented on firm ground, and not on a moving saddle.

Ducrow quitted Franconi's, the proprietor of an equestrian establishment of his own. He boasted a stud of ten horses; his company consisted chiefly of members of his family. He had married Miss Griffith, a lady rider of rare accomplishments and remarkable beauty. His brother, John Ducrow, was clown to the ring. His sister was a graceful performer, and was afterwards known to fame as Mrs. Broadfoot. He travelled through France, meeting everywhere with extraordinary favour. At Lyons, however, his performances were prohibited for three weeks, owing to an accident which had occurred in his theatre in the course of a military spectacle. One of the soldiers had fired away his ramrod, and fatally wounded a woman in the gallery. Further, the manager of the Royal Theatre, finding his entertainment neglected, threatened to close his doors if Ducrow's displays were persisted in. Matters, however, were accommodated upon Ducrow's consenting to pay one-fifth of his receipts to the Royal Theatre, and to devote one-tenth to the poor. The success of the circus was now greater than ever. By way of counter-attraction, M. Mazurier, the famous man monkey, was engaged at the Royal Theatre. Ducrow forthwith announced that he would perform on horseback, riding at full speed, every feat that Mazurier was accustomed to accomplish on a stationary stage. His benefit attracted an enormous crowd. He was presented with a gold medal by the Duchesse d'Angoulême, and with numberless silver spurs, decorated whips, and sets of harness by his other admirers. After a most prosperous campaign he quitted the city amid a shower of bouquets.

He succeeded equally well in other parts of France. "The circus was yesterday crowded to excess," wrote a Nantes paper, *L'Ami de la Charte*. "M. Ducrow, excited by the presence of a numerous company, surpassed himself. He was more extraordinary, more graceful, more powerful than ever. How expressive and animated his pantomime: how fine his postures! The more one sees M. Ducrow the more one wishes to see him. He absolutely resuscitates Proteus. Without quitting his horse he assumes the air, costume, and gait of six different characters. This scene, which is truly comic, and which he calls the Carnival of Venice, occasions immense laughter."

The spectacle of the Cataract of the Ganges, with its "real horses" and "real water," presented at Drury Lane under Elliston's management, in 1823, proved so remarkable an attraction that it was deemed necessary to produce some similar entertainment at Covent Garden. Accordingly, Ducrow and his horses were engaged to appear in the operatic drama of *Cortez*, or the Conquest of Mexico. This work, contrived by Mr. Planché, and partly founded on the Indian Emperor of Dryden, is a good specimen of the "horse spectacle," and though it could not vie with the popularity of the famous Cataract, yet obtained considerable applause. The author prided himself on his fidelity to history, and the situations represented: notably, the burning of his fleet by Cortez, and the flight of the magicians at the appearance of the conqueror's cavalry, were exhibitions of a stirring kind. In the following season Elliston engaged Ducrow's stud to appear in a drama called the *Enchanted Courser*. At the time appointed for the first rehearsal, the horses duly attended, but no Ducrow! A messenger was despatched for him, when it appeared that the extraordinary mistake had been made of engaging the steeds without reference to the services of their master. Much to his chagrin Elliston was now compelled to secure Ducrow, in addition, upon his own terms. The *Enchanted Courser* did not prove very attractive. The public was perhaps growing weary of seeing the "equestrian drama" on the boards of the patent theatres.

Ducrow now reappeared at Astley's, and soon becoming one of the proprietors of the theatre, commenced a long career of prosperity. Under his rule Astley's rose greatly in popular estimation, and obtained recognition as a fashionable place of enter-

tainment. He secured the favour and patronage of King William the Fourth, who fitted up an arena in the Pavilion at Brighton, in order that Ducrow might there perform in private his more famous feats, and especially the impersonation of antique statues he was accustomed to introduce in his scene of Raphael's Dream.

Unlettered as he was, rarely venturing upon a "speaking part," however small, and indulging always off the stage in the strong language of the stable, Ducrow was yet remarkable for his refined taste as a stage-manager, and his keen eye for pictorial and theatrical effect. He was unequalled as a contriver of spectacles, in arranging scenic illusions, in grouping supernumeraries upon the stage, in combining and contrasting the hues of costumes and draperies. He set poetry of motion above poetry of thought, stir before repose, spangles before speeches. "Action, action, action," was the principle of his management. He was the author of that precious theatrical rule: "Cut the dialect and get to the 'osses." And apparently he did not underrate the intellectuality of his patrons. Critics might condemn his plays as unworthy and illegitimate, but a great public followed him admiringly. Supreme success crowned his labours.

The year 1833 was memorable for the coalition, for a season, of Drury Lane and Covent Garden Theatres. Both establishments came under the government of the once famous Mr. Alfred Bunn, whose monopoly, as it was called, did not enjoy, however, a very prolonged existence. But as it was part of the manager's plan to stay the system of rivalry and imitation which had long been carried on by the two theatres, he resolved to banish clown and pantaloon for a term from Drury Lane, and in lieu of a Christmas pantomime to produce the grand pageant of St. George and the Dragon. To Ducrow was intrusted the stage arrangement of this spectacle. The part of St. George was allotted to him, and the whole strength of his equestrian establishment was enlisted for the occasion. Mr. Bunn in his book of the Stage, while recognising Ducrow's untiring zeal to perfect the performance of the drama, makes mention of the diverting manner in which he was accustomed to carry out his measures. An instance of this occurred at an early rehearsal of the spectacle. The second act opened with the celebration of the nuptials of the emperor's daughter, the ceremony being interrupted by the en-

trance of a neatherd, in great dismay, with an announcement that the scourge of Egypt, the dragon, had reappeared upon the coast. Ducrow had instructed the supernumeraries, on hearing this intelligence, to rush terrified to the throne of the monarch for counsel; then to the chancellor, to whom the monarch was supposed to refer them; and lastly, on the advice of the chancellor, to the kindled altar of the gods of Egypt. Over and over again was this incident rehearsed. The supernumeraries could not be induced to give any life or expression to the scene. In a mob they moved to and fro without the slightest indication of the panic that was supposed to be afflicting them. Ducrow, in a state of fury, sprang upon the stage and acted the scene for them, exclaiming the while: "Look here, you fools! You should rush up to the king, that old chap sitting there, and say, 'Look here, old fellow! The dragon has come, and we're in a dreadful mess, and you must get us out of it.' The king says, 'Don't bother me, go to Brougham!'" (Lord Brougham was chancellor at that period.) "You all rush to Brougham. Brougham cries out in a rage, 'What do I know about a dragon? Go to your gods!' And your gods is that lump of tow burning on that bit of timber there!" This wild speech, interspersed with vehement expletives, he accompanied with the most admirable pantomimic action, and ultimately succeeded in imparting to his troop something of his own spirit. St. George proved a great success, and was followed by a similar work, King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. It was acknowledged that the popularity of these spectacles was mainly due to the efforts of Ducrow, and he was made the recipient of various presents and testimonials. Queen Adelaide gave one hundred pounds; Mr. Bunn presented him with gold and silver vases of considerable value; the company of his own amphitheatre bestowed upon him a gold snuff-box, with a suitable inscription; and Count D'Orsay, to complete Ducrow's costume of a Greek chieftain—he performed that character in certain of his scenes—presented him with pistols and dirk mounted in ivory and gold, which had originally belonged to Lord Byron.

If Ducrow was often comical in his speech at rehearsal, it is certain that he was invariably fearless in conduct as well. He asked no member of his company to perform any feat he could not readily himself accomplish. At Astley's he lived in the

private house adjoining the theatre, and would often come upon the stage in his dressing-gown and slippers to supervise the preparations for the performance of the evening. On one occasion a rope-dancer, who was announced to ascend from the stage to the upper gallery, declined to perform the feat, alleging that the rope was insecure. "You're afraid of hurting yourself, I suppose," said Ducrow. "Well, I'm not pretty, and I've nothing to fear. Give me the pole." And, "accoutred as he was," he ascended and descended the rope in safety. After this exploit of his manager in *slippers* the performer could no longer hesitate. But even the practised artists of the theatre are said to have shuddered at the perilous performance of Ducrow. At another time, one of the actors, who was required to drop from a set piece in a scene representing a precipice, hesitated, stating that the fall would endanger his life. Ducrow took his place and quietly *jumped* from the elevation—the difference between jumping and dropping being about six feet.

The cockney method of speech which Ducrow invariably adopted may have been something of an affectation. Mr. Bunn especially mentions the equestrian's general intelligence and keen sense of humour, and certainly his addresses to the public were admirable efforts of their kind. These he is understood to have contrived without assistance from other hands. When Braham, the singer, entered upon his unfortunate speculation at the Colosseum, and at considerable expense engaged the Bedouin Arabs to appear, Ducrow announced that a similar entertainment would be presented at Astley's Theatre by a much larger number of artists. Application was made to the magistrates at Bow-street to restrain the proceedings of Ducrow. Upon this, the following handbill proceeded from Astley's Theatre:

"EXTRAORDINARY EQUESTRIAN AND GYM-NASTIC ARAB FEATS! Surpasses anything of the kind ever produced! The public are respectfully informed that these are not the FOUR BLACK MEN who play without their shoes and stockings at the West-end of the town, but upwards of forty British artists that challenge all Europe, for talent, variety, extraordinary feats of manly skill and activity, and who nightly receive thunders of applause from crowded audiences, and do not play to a dozen of daily loungers. The union of talent and Arab spectacles of this establishment does not confine itself to the tumbling of FOUR GREAT

UGLY BLACKS, who have been refused an engagement at Astley's because there are so many superior and extraordinary men of our own country nearly starving, and compelled to perform on an open race-course for a penny, whilst those four men can get one hundred pounds per week because they are black and foreigners!

"The reader, no doubt, has witnessed boys running alongside of a coach, doing what is termed cat-in-wheels, and turning foresprings with one hand and then the other, or throwing summersaults from a sandbank. Such is the grand performances of these sauteurs, consisting of three or four blacks who walk on their hands with their NAKED FEET IN THE AIR LIKE TWO BLACK FRYING-PANS. Of course no lady or respectable person can sit and see this!

"These blacks, with the men who take half their money, applied at Bow-street to ask if they could not prevent Astley's from using the word 'Arab exercises,' for that the public went every night and filled Astley's and never came to see them at all! Why, of course, the public are the best judges, and knows the difference between seeing a spectacle in character, produced with splendour, to introduce the talents of the flying man, the equilibrists, elastic tumblers, the antipodeans, jugglers, dancers, men and horses, tableaux, the groups of trained horses, and other novelties! But come see and judge for yourselves, for this is only a small part of Astley's entertainments."

It is needless to say that the public found this invitation quite irresistible, and that Astley's was nightly crowded with admirers of Ducrow's Bedouins of British growth.

Mr. Bunn, narrating the misfortunes of a manager, enlarges upon the miseries attending "the fag-end of the season," owing to the systematic negligence of the performers, and the shameful proceedings of the operatives and mechanics of the establishment. It must be borne in mind that his account refers to a state of things existing some forty years ago. Much reformation has no doubt taken place in the matter, and the experience of the modern manager may be altogether different. Mr. Bunn had mentioned the subject to Ducrow, from whom he received a very graphic account of the conclusion of the campaign at Astley's. "I don't know how you find it," said Ducrow, "but as soon as I announce the last nights of the season, the beggars begin to give themselves airs. I went into the theatre t'other night, and seeing a prime little roasting-

pig on a nice white napkin in the hall, I told some one to take it up-stairs to Mrs. Ducrow. The fellow said it warn't for me, it was for Mr. Roberts. You know who he is? Why, he's the chap as orders the corn for the horses. I'm only the chap as pays for it. So he gets the pigs and I don't. Then those confounded carpenters of mine sneak in of a morning with their hands in their breeches-pockets, doubled up as though they'd got the colic. And at night they march out as upright as grenadiers. Why? 'Cause every one of 'em has got a deal plank at his back up his coat. Then the supernumeraries carry out each of 'em a lump of coal in his hat, and going round the corner, club their priggings together, and make up the best part of a chaldron of it. As to the riders, they come into rehearsal gallows grand, 'cause they've had all the season a precious deal better salary than they were worth; and at night they come in gallows drunk from having had a good dinner for once in their lives; and forgetting that they may want to come back another year, they are as saucy as a bit of Billingsgate." Mr. Bunn confirms the accuracy of this description. "This is about the case with all theatres," he writes; "and while the manager is blamed for all these ill-doings, and most assuredly is the only sufferer by them, the real criminals escape unpunished."

In 1834 Ducrow lost his brother John, the clown. Mrs. Ducrow died in 1836. Two years later Ducrow married Miss Woolford, long a famous equestrian at Astley's. Under the date of the 10th of June, 1838, Mr. Bunn records in his journal: "Dined at Topham's New Hotel at Richmond to celebrate Ducrow's matrimonial honours participated in by Miss Woolford."

On the 8th of June, 1841, Astley's Amphitheatre was totally destroyed by a fire which broke out at five in the morning, and which no exertions could subdue. Ducrow and his family narrowly escaped with their lives; a female servant perished in the ruins. The stud at this time consisted of some fifty horses, two zebras, and a few asses and mules; of these scarcely any were rescued. The total loss was estimated at thirty thousand pounds.

Ducrow was ruined, or believed himself to be so. His mind gave way under the pressure of his misfortunes. He died in the York-road, Lambeth, on the 27th of January following. In his will he left directions that a sum of eight hundred pounds should be expended on a monu-

ment to his memory, to be erected in Kensal Green Cemetery. The annual interest arising from two hundred pounds invested in the funds was to be devoted to the purchase of flowers for the adornment of his grave. This monument, one of the most remarkable contained in the cemetery, is a curious Egyptian-looking structure of large size and lavish ornamentation. Plants encircle it, and do something to screen and to relieve its excessive embellishments. The inscription runs: "Within this tomb, erected by genius for the reception of its own remains, are deposited those of Andrew Ducrow, whose death deprived the arts and sciences of an eminent professor and liberal patron; his family of an affectionate husband and father; and the world of an upright man." It is understood that this epitaph was written by the equestrian's widow.

Ducrow has been called the "king of mimics," the "Colossus of equestrians," and other fanciful names. His performances in the ring were noted for their grace, daring, and inventiveness. His pantomime was remarkable for its variety and intensity. He was clearly a mute actor of rare ability, but many of his feats have, of course, now become the ordinary "business" of the modern circus. The repertory of the riders of to-day is greatly indebted to Ducrow's skill and fancy. Whenever an especially attractive act of horsemanship is now presented, the spectator may safely conclude that he has witnessed a faithful following of an example set by Ducrow.

Ducrow was five feet eight inches in height, of fair complexion, and handsome features. Exceedingly muscular and of prodigious strength, his figure was yet graceful in outline and perfectly symmetrical. He was accomplished as a contortionist, and could twist his shapely limbs into the strangest forms. Doctor Barker, lecturing in the School of Surgery at Edinburgh, during a visit of Ducrow to that city, recommended his pupils by all means to see the great equestrian, "as they would then be able to form a judgment of what the human frame was capable of as regards development, position, and distortion." With all his impetuosity of temper and speech, Ducrow was yet thoroughly kind-hearted and liberal. He was held in warm regard by the members of his company. In his profession he was an enthusiast, and spared no labour and outlay to perfect the spectacles and performances he purveyed. The play-

going public never possessed a more untiring servant and caterer for their diversion than they found in this intrepid, illiterate rider and rope-dancer, Andrew Ducrow.

THE LIGHT OF THE HEARTH.

FATHER and children with red wet eyes
Open the cage and the linnet flies:
All the house has been sorrow-rack'd,
And water and food the bird hath lack'd.

Mother sleeps in the churchyard near,
Her seat at the board is empty and drear,
The rose-bush withers at the door,
The kind hand waters it no more.

The spinning-wheel is silent there;
With holes in his stockings the boy doth fare;
The spider spins on the ceiling grey,
No brisk broom brushes it away.

The mother's care was ever blest,
Her busy hands were never at rest;
Father oft was angry and mad,
But now in the ingle he sits, so sad!

Sad he sits by a cheerless fire,
Help from strangers he now must hire;
Much indeed may be bought for gold,
All save the heart that is now so cold.

The busy, blessing, caressing hand,
The face so thoughtful, and sweet, and bland,
For the first last time are loved and known
When the gentle light of the hearth hath down.

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

LEICESTER-SQUARE.

ABOUT 1635, when the Civil War was already brewing, Robert Sydney, Earl of Leicester, built a mansion at the north-east corner of a square plot of "Lammas land," or common, belonging to the poor of St. Martin's parish. The land could not have been very valuable, since the earl only paid three pounds a year for the rent of the field before his house, with the building ground and garden. Other houses soon sprang up, and in 1671 the south side was completed. This Earl of Leicester was the father of Algernon Sydney, the patriot who conspired against Charles the Second; of the handsome Sydney who figures in so many of De Grammont's adventures; and of the Lady Dorothy, the Sacharissa of the poet Waller. Singularly enough, the square, even in those early times, seems to have had an attraction for foreigners, the earl frequently letting his mansion to distinguished strangers. At one time, Colbert, the French Ambassador, resided here, while in Queen Anne's reign Prince Eugène lived in Leicester House, and did his best to prevent peace between England and France. In Leicester House the Queen of Bohemia came to end her troublous life, neglected by a licentious court which had no sympathy with her

heroism. Strype, writing in 1720, calls Leicester Fields "a very handsome, large square, enclosed with rails and graced on all sides with good houses, well inhabited and resorted unto by gentry, especially the side towards the north, where the houses are larger, amongst which is Leicester House, the seat of the Earl of Leicester, and the house adjoining to it, inhabited by the Earl of Aylesbury."

In 1718, when the Prince of Wales (afterwards George the Second) had been turned out of St. James's by his irascible father, he bought Leicester House, and started an opposition court. Here his son, the Duke of Cumberland, the hero of Culloden, was born in 1721. In due time the princely mutineer came to the throne, and quarrelling with his son in his turn, Prince Frederick also turned his back on his father and took up his abode in Leicester House with his dancing-master and all those other parasites who aided him to vex and insult his father. It was to Leicester House that the wife of the Earl of Cromarty came with four of her children to intercede for her husband, implicated in the '45 Rebellion. The princess made no reply to the supplicating woman except by bringing in her own children and placing them beside her. Addison's play of Cato was performed in Leicester House by the prince's family; the boy (afterwards George the Third) taking the part of Portius.

That good-natured poet, Gay, was often at Leicester House, and suffered here many indignities. On one occasion, having come to read his tragedy of the Captives to the princess and her ladies, Gay, abashed at the audience he saw assembled, stumbled over a stool, and falling forwards threw down a heavy Japan screen, to his own infinite confusion and the alarm and amusement of the giggling maids of honour. For writing his admirable Fables for the young Duke of Cumberland, Gay was offered the place of gentleman usher to a child princess, a post his pride would not let him accept. "Why," he groans to Pope, "did I not take your advice before my writing Fables for the duke, not to write them, or rather to write them for some young nobleman? It is very, very hard fate. I must get nothing, write for them or against them."

In March, 1751, Frederick, Prince of Wales, died suddenly at Leicester House, from the breaking of an imposthume, which had been caused by the blow of a tennis-ball. No character can be conceived so contemptible as that which is handed down to us of this prince. He was a great

gambler, and the most frivolous of men. He boasted of "nicking Bubb Doddington out of five thousand pounds," and then tried to win popular favour by honouring Pope with a visit, and sending Glover, the author of *Leonidas*, five hundred pounds. He was a mass of contradictions; affable to the poor, yet detesting his own parents; a faithless husband, yet always praising his wife; desirous of acquiring military glory, yet amusing himself, while Carlisle was being besieged, by bombarding a barley-sugar castle with sweetmeats. With all these faults, the people, when he died, exclaimed, "Oh, that it were but his brother! Oh, that it had been the butcher (Cumberland)!" The butcher's remark upon his brother's death was worthy of him. "It is a great blow to the country, but I hope it will recover in time."

After her husband's death, the princess kept Prince George in great seclusion at Leicester House, under the dominion of the Earl of Bute.

There was blood spilt in Leicester-square in 1698. On the 29th of October in that year, some officers had been drinking at the Greyhound Tavern in the Strand, and a quarrel that there arose ended in a duel in Leicester Fields. The revellers had split into two parties; the notorious Lord Mohun, Lord Warwick, and a Mr. Coote on one side, and on the other Captain James, Captain French, and a Mr. Dockwra; hurrying into sedan-chairs, they were taken to the place of combat. Two duels then took place, one between Captain French and Mr. Coote, the other between Captain James and the Earl of Warwick. Little is known of what first happened, but the result was that Mr. Coote, severely wounded, died soon afterwards, and was carried to the Round House, in St. Martin's-lane. The Earl of Warwick and Lord Mohun were tried in Westminster Hall, before the House of Lords, on the 28th of March, 1699, and the evidence given on the trial is full of curious details, illustrative of the manners of the times.

It appeared that when Mr. Coote was hurrying along in his sedan towards the Fields, he swore at the chairmen, and declared he would run his sword into them if they did not get to the place first. He and Lord Mohun got out of the chairs at the corner of Green-street, "the lower corner of the paved stones going up to Leicester House." When the duel was ended, the chairmen tried to lift the sedan over the rails, but seeing Mr. Coote was dying, and declaring the blood would spoil the chair,

refused to meddle any more with him till a hundred pounds was promised them if they would carry him to a surgeon. Still unable to lift the chair containing the dying man, the chairmen then went to the aid of Captain French, who was severely wounded, and took him to a French surgeon's at a bagnio, in Long Acre. There the Earl of Warwick swore at them, and told them to call the next day for their money. When Mr. Coote was examined by the surgeons, they found that he was run through the lungs and the diaphragm.

When the Earl of Warwick and his friends, somewhat sobered by what had happened, met at the bagnio, they examined their swords; the Earl of Warwick's was covered with blood, but yet they all agreed that it was French who had fought Coote. Nevertheless the earl fled that night, and hid himself till parliament met. The two noblemen were acquitted; the earl, claiming "the benefit of clergy," being discharged on the payment of the usual fees. His widow married Addison, who found her, to his cost, high tempered and despotic. It was the son of the duellist who was summoned to Addison's death-bed to see how a Christian should die.

At No. 47, on the west side (from 1761 to his death in 1792), lived Sir Joshua Reynolds. The great painter led a methodical life: he rose early, breakfasted at nine, entered his studio at ten, examined designs, or touched unfinished portraits till eleven, when the knocker began to resound, and titled people to rustle in; he painted till four, then dressed, and gave the evening to society. His beaming spectacles and his ear-trumpet were to be seen often at the club and theatre of those days, and the owner of them was always welcome. Doctor Johnson, Goldsmith, Walpole, Banks, Sterne, Gibbon, almost every one celebrated in those days knocked at the door of No. 47.

Reynolds's pleasant dinner-parties seem to have partaken somewhat of the picnic character—never knives or glasses enough, bad waiting, but good talk. Every one scrambles for himself, and Johnson eats till the veins swell out on his forehead; Goldsmith suggests a reply to an axiom of Johnson's, and is stared at by Boswell; Gibbon talks with learned dignity, and Burke is more eloquent even than usual. Reynolds had his vexations too here, when Barry's moroseness vexed him, and when grand people returned portraits as bad likenesses, or complained of the colour fading. Here he chafed to think of young Lawrence setting up in opposition in the same square,

or fretted at the preference some people had for Romney. With well-bred sitters he was polite and amiable, but when a rich citizen told him once that the pattern of his lace ruffles was obscurely made out, Sir Joshua replied hastily: "That is my manner, sir, that is my manner;" and when a vain lady displayed her taper hands, he said, calmly: "Madam, I commonly paint my hands from my servants."

Half that busy yet tranquil life of Sir Joshua's passed at No. 47, till at last came that sad afternoon, when, finding himself growing blind, he laid down his brush, and said, mournfully, "I know that all things on earth must come to an end, and now I am come to mine."

Nor do we often visit Leicester-square without thinking of the affecting story of Reynolds, almost blind, wandering round the rails, seeking for a pet canary of his that had strayed.

Hogarth lived at the east side of the square, nearly at the south end. In his time a cork gilt head stood over the door. There the little man, with the full round forehead, and the firm mouth, painted all his great pictures; and there, in dreams, the hideous Idle Apprentice and the handsome good one, the Rake, the hangmen, the madmen, the thieves, and all the odd people whom he painted, visited him. From this spot Hogarth sallied to see the Rake married to the rich old maid at Marylebone Church, and to the Adam and Eve to see the Guards stagger by to Finchley. From here he set out for his walk to the quiet New River and to Southwark Fair, with all its noise and merry clamour. From Covent Garden brawls, carefully noted by him, and from executions at Tyburn, Hogarth returned to this square, to think over his pictures. It is difficult to imagine that such nightmare figures as Tom Idle and the wretches of Gin Lane did not perpetually haunt the painter, but we suppose he exorcised them by thoughts of the pleasant faces he could paint when he liked. The pretty actress the rustics are staring at in the Southwark Fair, the compassionate girl who saves the Rake from arrest, are specimens of Hogarth in his happier and more innocent moods. His terrible power of satire, his honest hatred of what was evil, enabled Hogarth to brand more rascals than even Pope, yet without the poet's personal malice.

In Leicester-square this great satirist spent his busy middle life, close to where, in youth, he had been apprenticed to Gamble, the silversmith. He had worked

hard before he drew that last sketch, which he called the End of All Things, adding to a series of worn-out and broken things a shattered palette, emblematical of his approaching death.

Next door to Hogarth lived John Hunter, the great surgeon, and here he stored those treasures now in the Royal College of Surgeons. The story goes that when the studious man used to return for a quiet evening's reading, he would often, to his disgust, find the house full of company, and on one occasion, provoked beyond endurance, he is said to have ordered the whole party his wife had invited out of the house.

In St. Martin's-street, on the south side of the square, Sir Isaac Newton lived; the little turret that was his observatory is still to be seen. Doctor Burney afterwards took the house. He was one of Doctor Johnson's steadfast friends, and to his door the giant of literature must have often made his ponderous way. Burney was fond of telling how he attended the first representation of Johnson's tragedy of Irene, and witnessed the public disapprobation. When the heroine was about to be strangled on the stage, the audience cried "Murder." Many stories were circulated at the time, Burney says, of the author's being observed at the representation to be himself dissatisfied with some of the speeches and conduct of the play, and, like La Fontaine, expressing his disapprobation aloud. Quite as a young man, we find Burney so delighted with the Rambler, that he became a subscriber to the Dictionary the moment the great project was announced, and Johnson replied to his letter in the blandest terms. "Your civilities," he wrote, "were offered with too much elegance not to engage attention, and I have too much pleasure in pleasing men like you not to feel very sensibly the distinction which you have bestowed upon me." Burney has preserved some interesting notes of Johnson's conversations, and describes him at Streatham telling Miss Thrale that she should dash away on the harpsichord like Burney. Although the doctor generally talked slightly of music, Burney upon this said to him, "I believe, sir, we shall make a musician of you at last." Upon which Johnson replied, "Sir, I shall be glad to have a new sense given me." Of Burney's daughter, the authoress of Evelina, Johnson was a great admirer. One day at the Essex-street Club, he boasted that the day before, at Mrs. Garrick's, he had dined with Fanny Burney,

Mrs. Carter, and Mrs. Hannah More, and three such women were not to be found elsewhere. He was, indeed, never tired of flattering and praising Fanny Burney, who keenly appreciated his homage.

One day a lady made Johnson talk of love. The doctor eulogised the tender passion in tremendous phrases. "We must not despise a passion," he thundered, "which he who never felt never was happy, and he who laughs at never deserves to feel; a passion which has caused the change of empires and the loss of worlds; a passion which has inspired heroism and subdued avarice; a passion, in short, that consumes me away for my pretty Fanny (Burney) here, and she is very cruel." One special night at the Burneys the authoress of *Evelina* has herself described. She paints Johnson as very ill-favoured, tall, stout, and grand in figure, but stooping horribly, his mouth opening and shutting continually, his fingers twirling, his hands twisting, his vast body sawing backwards and forwards, his whole great person looking as if it were going to roll itself quite voluntarily from his chair to the floor. Presently, after holding his nose quite close to the keys of the piano while a duet was playing, he strode to the book-shelves, and taking down a book began to read, as if entirely oblivious of every one present. At a subsequent party Miss Burney sketches with much humour the despotic way in which Johnson ordered about Boswell, who was always trying to get near him, with a "What do you do there, sir? Go to the table, sir. What are you thinking of, sir? Why do you get up before the cloth is removed? Come back to your place, sir." Which makes us shrewdly conjecture that Boswell, after all, must have had a hard life of it.

Saville House (north side, some years ago destroyed by fire) was sacked by the mob during those terrible Gordon Riots, in which Barnaby Rudge figured. The men with the blue ribbons hated the proprietor for his supposed anti-Protestant feeling; their expression of dislike was not of the gentlest kind, and unripping beds and demolishing looking-glasses was their only consolation for burning Sir George Saville's mansion to the ground.

Leicester House, subsequent to its being pulled down, became a show place for a Museum of Natural History, collected by Sir Ashton Lever. Eventually the museum was put up in a lottery, only eight hundred out of thirty-six thousand tickets being sold. For all this it was won by Mr. Parkinson,

the proprietor of only two tickets, who afterwards exhibited the collection in Blackfriars. It was eventually offered to the British Museum, but was, after all, sold by auction in 1806. The sale lasted four days, and there were four thousand one hundred and ninety-four lots.

The memories of Hogarth, Reynolds, and Newton form a border of immortelles for Leicester-square, that even its general dinginess and disrepair cannot hide. May we live to see the day when the hideous statue in the centre of weeds and refuse is replaced by some real work of art, and flowers take the place of nettles. At present the square is an eyesore and a disgrace to that quarter of London.

WAXWORK.

WAX once played a more important part in the history of every-day life than it does now. The busy bee made wax and honey centuries ago as at present, neither less nor more cleverly; but there were reasons why those products were more valued in the days of Queen Elizabeth, or of Queen Matilda, than in those of Queen Victoria. When gas-lighting was unknown, when petroleum, paraffine, kerosene, camphine, stearine, and ozokerit had not yet been discovered, society depended on wax for the best lights, and coarse tallow, coarse oil, and torches for common purposes. Then again, mead or honey wine was a favourite beverage in old days, whereas a modern Londoner would scarcely deem it a good substitute for Barclay or Bass: we may approve or disapprove the change of taste, but it certainly leaves us now very little dependent on the bee.

Every one knows what wax is. The bee does not really form or originate this substance. Wax enters into the composition of the pollen of flowers, covers the envelope of the plum and other fruits, and forms a sort of varnish on the surface of many kinds of leaves. Myrtle wax is obtained from the berries of the *Myrica cerifera*, an American plant; when the berries are boiled in water, the wax exudes, floats on the water, is skimmed off, and remelted. The wax-palm of the Andes, the *Ceroxylon Andicola*, is a lofty tree yielding a mixture of wax and resin, of which the natives make candles. The wax-tree of Guiana and Brazil yields a resinous juice which is called wax, although it scarcely deserves that name. What we generally know as wax, however, is the product of the bee;

whether the insect elaborates it from the pollen of flowers, or from an animal secretion, we may leave naturalists to determine. The wax is used by the bee to construct the honeycomb. When separated by pressure, melting in hot water, subsidence, and cooling, it presents itself as a softish yellow substance. By subsequent melting, stretching out into a kind of ribbon, and exposure to bleaching agents, it becomes white or bleached wax, more pure than the yellow, and having a somewhat higher melting point. In making this substance into wax candles, several prepared wicks are suspended over a vessel of melted wax, the wax is poured to a sufficient thickness on the wicks by a ladle, and the candles when cooled are made cylindrical and polished by rolling on a smooth table.

Wax lights were indispensable accompaniments to the other adornments of the royal palace, the feudal castle, and the baronial mansion of the olden time. In the Wardrobe Accounts of Edward the Fourth, somewhat less than four centuries ago, there is a curious entry to the following effect: "William Whyte, tallough-chaundeller, for iij dosen and ix lb. of p's candell, for to light when the king's highness and goode grace on a nyght come unto his sayd grete warderobe, and at other divers tymes." From other entries it appears that p's was sometimes spelled peris, sometimes pares, sometimes parys; it is believed that the lights so used were called Paris candles. In that singular forerunner of our modern books of etiquette, called the Boke of Curtasye, written about the same period as the Wardrobe Accounts above adverted to, there is distinct mention of wax candles and Paris candles, but without any notification as to the materials whereof the latter were made:

In chambre no lyght ther shalle be brent
But of wax, thereto yf ye take tent:
In halle at soper schalle candels brenne
Of Parys, therein that alle men kenne.

Here we are told of wax candles in the chamber and Paris candles in the hall, the former probably more delicate and costly than the latter.

The use of lighted wax candles in cathedrals, churches, and religious processions, and in connection with funerals, can be traced back through a long series of ages. There is an old Welsh legend to the effect that wax lights are used on the altar because bees derive their origin from Paradise, and are especially blessed by the Almighty; therefore mass ought not to be performed without the aid of the wax de-

rived from those favoured insects. There are some indications of such a use of wax as far back as the third century; throughout the whole history of the Roman Catholic Church the usage has been maintained. There was at one time in England a due called wax-shot or wax-scot, a gift of wax candles presented to churches three times a year. What were called wax-rolls were pieces or cakes of wax, flat circular discs, presented to churches, for the use of which they were made into candles or tapers, and some other sacred things. It is known that in the Anglo-Saxon times, under Ælfric and Edgar, lights were used on the altar during mass, while others were held in the hands of attendants during the reading of the gospel; and at all times since, the gift of candles, or of wax to make them, was deemed an acceptable religious service.

Several illustrations of this subject are to be met with in Mr. Toulmin Smith's recently published work, an antiquarian book almost as pleasant as a romance. We mean the Original Ordinances of more than One Hundred Early English Gilds. There is a dispute as to whether we should say gild or guild; but this need not detain us here. Very nearly five hundred years ago, a parliament held at Cambridge in the time of Richard the Second ordered that returns should be made to the king in council as to the ordinances, usages, and properties of the English gilds. The returns seem to have been duly made and forwarded; and the original parchments on which many of them were written still remain in the Record Office, where Mr. Toulmin Smith has ferreted them out by dint of great industry and care. Wax candles, or wax to make into candles, are frequently mentioned in the records, sometimes as presentations to churches, abbeys, and convents, sometimes as forfeits or penalties. The Guild of Garlekhith (near the present Garlick-hill) had a rule that all the members should meet four times a year, on pain of forfeiting a pound of wax; and the same forfeiture was imposed on any member who neglected to attend the funeral of a brother or sister of the guild. Many of the guilds, of which this was an example, partook of the nature of our modern friendly societies, but with a marked attention to the inculcation and encouragement of piety and morality. So singularly was the purpose carried out in the Guild of St. Katherine, Aldersgate, that each brother and sister on admittance was to kiss all present, in token of love, charity, and fellowship. Five round tapers of wax, of the weight of twenty

pounds, were to burn on high feast days to the honour of God, of the Virgin Mary, of St. Katherine, and all saints, and to be used to light round the body of a dead brother, and in his funeral procession. The wardens of St. Botolph's Guild, Norwich, stated in their return that they had in hand twenty-six shillings and eightpence for the maintenance of a light. The Guild of St. George, in the same city, had in hand forty shillings for the support of a light and the making of an image. In relation to St. Katherine's Guild, another in old Norwich, "of the chattel of the guild shall there be two candles of wax, of sixteen pounds weight, about the body of the dead," whenever any brother or sister departed this life. The Guild of Young Scholars at Lynn was established chiefly to maintain an image of St. William, standing in a tabernacle in the church of St. Margaret, with six tapers of wax burning on festival days. The Guild of St. Elene at Beverley kept three wax lights burning every Sunday and feast day, in honour of St. Elene; while at the morning mass of Christmas Day thirteen wax lights were burned. There must have been a goodly amount of wax consumed on the Feast of the Purification by the Guild of St. Mary at Beverley; for the brethren got up a pageant, in which two youths representing angels carried a chandelier or compound candlestick, containing twenty-four thick wax lights; and the other members each carried a wax light. In the Guild of the Resurrection of our Lord, at Lincoln, at the funeral rites of a brother, thirteen wax lights were burned in four stands. In the Guild of the Fullers of Lincoln, no member was permitted to teach the craft to a learner unless the latter contributed "twopence to the wax," that is, to the fund for buying wax lights. The Guild of Tailors, of the same city, imposed a fine of a stone of wax for infringement of one of the rules. As wax was sevenpence per pound in those days, representing a manifold higher price now, this fine was certainly a heavy one. In the Guild of St. Katherine, at Stamford, a fine of one pound of wax, plus twopence, was imposed on any member absent from the guild feast; and as the feast itself was valued at twopence per head, the absentee paid for a dinner which he did not eat, besides losing a pound of wax.

The altar use of candles is mentioned by Wordsworth in one of his stanzas:

Our ancestors within the still domain
Of vast cathedral or conventual gloom,
Their vigils kept: where tapers day and night
On the dim altar burned continuously.

And the Christmas candles, which our boys and girls still delight in, are they not relics of religious usages of old days?

The usages and traditions connected with Candlemas Day are associated with wax through the medium of the candles into which it was fashioned. There is an old Latin proverb to the effect that if the sun shines brilliantly on Candlemas Day, hard frost is coming. It got into English form as a couplet, that after Candlemas Day the frost will be more, if the sun then shines bright, than it has been before. A Norfolk saying tells us that:

As far as the sun shines on Candlemas Day,
So far will the snow blow in afore May.

Another is couched in very strong language, stronger, we will hope, than any countryman would really use:

When Candlemas Day is fine and clear,
A shepherd would rather see his wife on the bier.

Another, in four-line stanza, goes a little further into the weather-predicting line:

If Candlemas Day be fair and bright,
Winter will have another fight;
But if it be dark, with clouds and rain,
Winter is gone and will not come again.

Another version, somewhat different in its philosophy, is to the effect that whatever wind blows on Candlemas Day, will continue to blow for the next forty days. Candlemas Day, our almanacks tell us, comes on the 2nd of February, and is the anniversary of the Purification of the Virgin. On this day the Church of Rome directs the blessing of candles by the clergy, the distribution of them among the people, and the carrying of the lighted candles in solemn procession. The pope presides at a great ceremonial of this kind in the chapel of the Quirinal, on Candlemas Day; and minor celebrations take place at other churches. The candle is used symbolically in reference to a passage in the Song of Simeon. Very little notice of Candlemas, or of its origin, is now taken in England, beyond a few country customs and proverbs.

As far as possible removed from the use of wax as a light-giving material, is its employment as an impressionable substance, a material that can be cast into moulds when melted, and impressed with a die or seal when in a semi-molten state. The Greeks were familiar with this use of wax; they adorned their rooms with statuettes, branches, fruit, flowers, and wreaths, made of this substance. We are told that that very unrespectable gentleman, Heliogabalus, liked to tantalise his guests by setting before them dishes of waxen luxuries, so cleverly imitative of the

originals as to deceive all but the initiated. Wax is largely employed in producing imitations of anatomical specimens. One of the palaces at Florence contains thirty rooms filled with coloured wax imitations of parts of the human body, and of vegetable productions. This anatomical use of wax is said to have originated as follows: Nones, of Genoa, a hospital physician, in the seventeenth century, wished to preserve a human body by embalming it; but not being able entirely to prevent putrefaction, he considered whether he could imitate the body in wax. The Abbate Zumbo, of Sicily, imitated the head so perfectly, under the direction of Nones, that many persons believed the coloured wax to be the real head; and this led to the further cultivation of the art by a Frenchman named Delacroix. Anatomical wax preparations were exhibited at Hamburg, by Courège, in 1721; and in 1737 others were publicly sold in London.

Wax images and effigies have been more or less in favour for ages past. The wax effigies of the kings of England were at one time borne in procession at their funerals. There were wax effigies in Westminster Abbey, and at St. Denis, in Paris. There is a curious paper in the *Tatler*, by Steele, purporting to be an account of a waxwork exhibition in Germany, representing the religions of Christendom. Seven figures were placed in a row, some decked out fantastically; while behind them were other figures moved by clockwork, representing Persecution and Moderation, and so arranged as to play a kind of ecclesiastical drama. Steele describes it as having been a show carried about Germany, but names and places are not mentioned, and we are left to put our own interpretation upon it. The date would correspond very well with the time of Courège just mentioned. Mrs. Salmon's waxwork exhibition was a famous attraction in those days. In Italy beautiful figures in wax were made by Ercole Celli, and by Giovanni and Anna Manzolini. Many fine specimens by these artists are preserved in the museums at Bologna, Turin, Paris, and St. Petersburg. Other famous Italian artists were Calzi, Phillippo, Balugani, Terrini, and Fontana, the last-named of whom employed quite a staff of anatomists, model-cutters, wax-moulders, and painters.

Pinson and Laumonier in France, and Vogt in Germany, were accustomed to illustrate their anatomical lectures by means of wax casts; and the plan has since been extensively followed. Not the least cele-

brated among artists in wax was Madame Tussaud, who, in the exercise of her art eighty years ago, lived and worked during the terrible scenes of the great French Revolution. She prepared waxen effigies of the half-savage Marat, of his murderess Charlotte Corday, of the beautiful Princess of Lamballe, of the arch-terrorist Robespierre; and was herself, on one occasion, in imminent peril of the guillotine. After many trials and struggles she settled in London early in the present century, and here she made waxen celebrities for forty or fifty years. The old lady used to sit near the entrance of her exhibition-room to receive her visitors, until at length she died, about twenty years ago, at the advanced age of ninety. Her name is still given to the establishment over which her descendants or representatives now preside; but that is no more than we see in other cases; for who can tell us whether there is still a Day or a Martin at the blacking factory, or a Pickford at Pickford's?

Some of the waxen effigies produced and exhibited are made by modelling, some by casting. In the former case the wax is mixed with white turpentine and lard, forming a substance easily cut and modelled with tools. In making the figures by casting, molten wax is poured into a plaster-of-paris mould; and the mould being then taken to pieces, the wax cast is easily extricated. Sculptors sometimes form their first models in a composition of wax, Burgundy pitch, and lard; it works easily, and is convenient under many circumstances.

Taking an impression in wax is another mode again of using this remarkable substance. Lapidaries, gem cutters, and seal engravers often want to ascertain how their work, whether in intaglio or in cameo, is progressing; they mix some very fine wax with sugar-candy, burnt soot, and turpentine; they warm this mixture, and press the stone or gem upon it, by which a reversed copy of the device is produced. Sealing-wax of the best kind is a misnomer; it is not wax at all, being made of shellac, Venice turpentine, and cinnabar or vermilion; in the black sticks ivory black is substituted for cinnabar. The cheaper kinds are equally without wax, common resin being used instead of shellac, common turpentine instead of Venice turpentine, red lead instead of cinnabar, and lampblack instead of ivory black. How beautifully defined are the impressions carefully taken in good sealing-wax most persons know.

Those who have occasion to pass through

that busy hive of lawyers, law stationers, and law writers, Southampton-buildings, Chancery-lane, may once now and then see a covered cart drawn up at a particular doorway, and hundreds of bright tin boxes removed from the cart into the building to which the doorway leads. The boxes are flat and circular, larger than snuff-boxes, smaller than gentlemen's collar-boxes, say about as large as muffins. These boxes are to contain wax seals, and they are being delivered into the Patent Office, where so much money is spent every year by inventors of new machines and new processes. In the accounts submitted annually to parliament by the Commissioners of Patents is an item of expenditure for seals for letters patent, and another item for boxes to contain the seals. Every letter patent, as the official record of a patented invention is called, is obliged to carry about with it a large yellowish seal three or four inches in diameter, enclosed in a flat circular tin box to prevent it from breaking, and fastened to the parchment by tapes or ribbons. The impression is taken in yellow wax from the Great Seal, and without this impression the patentee's claim would be invalid.

The seals here spoken of are really made of wax, though somewhat coarse in quality, mixed with Venice turpentine or some similar substance. This soft wax for legal seals was formerly used for sealing letters, until the introduction of the harder (mis-called) sealing-wax. At a time when sealing-wax was very costly in England, and before gummed envelopes were in use, an elderly lady, widow of a military officer, eked out a scanty income by begging the seals of old letters from friends and every one she knew, removing fragments, &c., by warm water, melting the wax, and re-making it into sticks.

CASTAWAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN
PORT," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER X. ABANDONED.

Two hours after the event just narrated, the household at Wheatcroft began to settle down into something like order again. True that here and there in the passages were still to be seen women gathered together in knots, some weeping, some gesticulating, all talking. True that in the servants' hall a group comprising the gardeners, grooms, and out-door servants of

the establishment, partly paralysed with horror, kept their mugs of beer suspended in the air, as they listened to the footman's thrilling narrative of his discovery of the body. True that Mr. Johnson, the butler, had a select audience in the pantry of men of his own standing, well-qualified judges of a bottle of excellent Madeira, which he had thought the solemnity of the occasion warranted him in broaching. But the crowd of townspeople, which immediately on the dreadful news being bruited abroad had come surging up from Springside and spread itself round the house, standing at tip-toe to peer over the hedges, staring up at the windows and over the chimney-pots, as though expectant of some revelation from them, eagerly demanding news in feverish whispers, and charging up to the lodge gates to glare at any one going in or out of them, had dispersed. A large portion of it had followed the fly, which, with the prisoner and superintendent of police, and two constables on the box, had driven away to the old Guildhall: followed it with roars of bitter execration and threats of personal violence; for not only had the dead man been well liked in Springside, but the rumour had got abroad that the murderer was his son—his son, who had always been a prodigal, a black sheep, and a castaway, and who had on more than one occasion threatened his father's life.

In the library, everything remained just as at the time of the struggle. The body, by Doctor Chenoweth's direction, had been placed upon the couch, where it lay, the dull outline of the profile and the projecting feet showing under the white sheet which had been thrown over it. But the overturned table on which the lamp had stood—the lamp itself bent and broken and surrounded with a thousand particles of shattered glass; the window-curtain torn away from its rings, and hanging over in a ragged festoon; the book which the dead man had been reading, and which had dropped from his hand when he first caught sight of his assailant—all these mute, inanimate objects lay just as they were at the time of the struggle. There was confusion and chaos, but there was no stain of blood on the carpet, nor anything to indicate the deadly end of the encounter that had taken place; the disorder might have been the result of some drunken frolic, save for the presence of that awful form which lay still and motionless on the couch, over which hung the picture of what it once had been in the prime of its life and the days of its glory.

It was by Captain Cleethorpe's orders that the room had been left exactly as they found it, and that the door had been locked, not to be opened until the coroner's jury assembled for the inquest. It was with the greatest difficulty that Riley had been induced to obey these orders. The old soldier-servant pleaded in heart-piercing accents to be allowed to remain by the dead body of the master whom in life he had loved so well and served so faithfully. After his first wild shriek of horror and surprise when he recognised the man whom he had seized, the old man became strangely silent. In answer to the eager inquiries of the bystanders, to whom Gerald was unknown, he was compelled to admit that the young man standing there, closely guarded by two grooms whilst the assistance of the police was being summoned, was indeed Sir Geoffrey Heriot's son, but more than this he would not say. He kept his back studiously turned upon the prisoner, who, deadly white, and quivering in every limb, yet preserved a certain proud appearance, and gazed fearlessly round, and seeming to ignore everything that was going on, knelt by the side of the body and apostrophised it in simple mournful lamentation. The old man was the last of all to quit the room, and when Mr. Drage gently led him away, he broke from the kind hand that was guiding his tottering footsteps, and rushing to his own chamber, flung himself upon his bed in an agony of grief.

In the dining-room, Captain Cleethorpe and Mr. Drage were seated, one on either side the fire. The fire had been lit for the first time that season, not that the evening was chilly, but rather in the vain hope of doing something to dispel the awful gloom which hung over the entire house; but the wood was damp, and only a thin smoky tongue of flame flickered fitfully in the grate. With the same hope, the butler had placed wine-glasses upon the table, but they remained untouched. Mr. Drage had evidently been unable to control his emotion; there were traces of tears upon his cheeks, his head was bowed down upon his breast, and from time to time a convulsive sob shook his wasted frame. When Captain Cleethorpe was at rest, he sat biting his nether lip and pulling at the ends of his moustache, but every now and then he would rise from his chair, plunge his hands into his pockets, and wander vaguely up and down the room, occasionally pausing to shrug his shoulders and rub his forehead, and then returning to his seat after the same dazed and puzzled air.

The silence, which had lasted for some time, was broken by the captain.

"It is of no use," he said, "it is perfectly impossible for me to realise what has occurred. There was a time when I was accustomed to look upon death in every shape, and when the excitement of my life was so great, that even an occurrence like this would not have struck me with any great amount of wonderment or dismay. But I am growing old I suppose, and the quiet time I have had of it down here for the last few years, has had the effect of robbing me of my pluck. I am as nervous and as weak as——"

"As I am—you were going to say," said the rector.

"On the contrary," said Captain Cleethorpe; "I was perfectly astonished to see how you, in your weak state of health, contrived to have all your senses about you, and to give exactly such orders as should have been given, under the effect of this sudden blow. That poor fellow, Riley, would never have suffered any one else to lead him from the room; and in several other instances your thoughtfulness and presence of mind were invaluable."

"I, too, am accustomed to death, though, of course, not under such fearful circumstances as this," said the rector, quietly. "I have seen more of it recently than you. Perhaps, too, there is something in the fact of my knowing that, notwithstanding the little rally which he made, our poor friend was inevitably doomed; and Doctor Chenoweth had warned me that his stay with us was probably limited to two hours. But the reaction is upon me now, and I feel myself rapidly giving way."

"It seems strange," said Cleethorpe, not heeding the last remark, "that a man whose lease from nature had so nearly expired should die a violent death!"

"It is by no means certain that such was the case."

"What do you mean?" asked Cleethorpe, bending forward with astonishment.

"Simply this," said the rector, adding quietly, "don't mind my shuddering; the mere thought of the thing turns me sick. Chenoweth told me that from the cursory examination he had made of the—of the body, he found no indications of violence sufficient to bring about the fatal result."

"But I myself saw the poor face clotted with blood!" said Captain Cleethorpe.

"True; but this was merely surface blood produced by the blows which had been struck. These blows, Chenoweth

thinks, were probably inflicted by the hand, certainly not by any weapon. There were no wounds from which the blood could have flowed; there was a slight discolouration of the neck under the cravat, as though the assassin had attempted to strangle his victim, but Chenoweth has very little doubt that the excitement of the struggle brought on an access of the heart disease, under which our poor friend was gradually sinking, and that in fact he died a natural death."

"Good heavens!" cried Cleethorpe, springing to an upright position from his chair. "If the doctor proves this on the trial this scoundrel will cheat the gallows!"

Mr. Drage looked up at his companion for a moment, then said, "I think you will find that the man who made the attack upon Sir Geoffry will still by the law be held liable for his death, even though Doctor Chenoweth's opinions were verified."

"How on earth do you know anything about the law?" asked Cleethorpe.

"In a strange way," said the rector. "When I first left college my father was strongly opposed to my taking orders, and when I insisted, vowed he would do nothing for me, so I was left to my own resources; and, by the aid of some old City friends, I obtained the chaplaincy of one of the jails, which I held for some time, and where I studied the intricacies and working of the criminal law. A case of this kind came under my notice. A poacher shot a gamekeeper, against whom he had been heard to vow vengeance. It was contended for the defence that the wound was not originally mortal, but that death had been brought about by the bungling manner in which the surgical operation had been performed. At the trial, the judge ruled that even if this were the case, the prisoner was guilty of murder, as it was in consequence of his act that a surgical operation was necessary. And the man was hanged!"

"A good precedent," said Cleethorpe, shortly. "I hope it will be followed in this instance!"

"Do you really believe that this young man attacked his father?"

"Believe it; how can I disbelieve it? Was he not caught red-handed?"

"Might he not have found himself accidentally on the spot after the attack had been made by somebody else?"

"My dear rector," said Captain Cleethorpe, shrugging his shoulders, "your jail-chaplain's experiences, of which you

were now speaking, ought to have rendered it evident to you that such an idea, if not an absurdity in itself, is, at all events, little likely to obtain credence. People very seldom find themselves on the 'spot' where a murder has been committed without some previous intention of being there. Besides, it is not supposed that the attack was made with a view to robbery; and who is there in this place, or in Europe, I might almost say, who bore any malice against our poor old friend?"

"But the accused man is his own son," said the rector. "His only son."

"Exactly," said Cleethorpe, "and that's just the worst part of the story. I suppose you don't know any of the circumstances of the case, but I am well posted up in them. This young fellow, some years since, was in the Cheddar yeomanry, in which I still hold a commission. In a row, at which I happened to be present, he showed the white feather, and the colonel was compelled to ask his father to remove him. Sir Geoffry gave way to his temper, which at that time was much worse than it has been since you have known him, and, after a frightful scene with his son, told the lad to consider himself dismissed and disinherited. I believe they never met again until the wretched night."

"Yes," said the rector, "there has been another meeting between them, which Sir Geoffry himself described to me. The young man came down here some weeks ago with certain testimony, which, at his outset in life he had declared he would obtain. He made his way in the dusk to the library, where Sir Geoffry saw him, and, after a very stormy interview, ordered him from the house."

"Now, my dear rector," said Captain Cleethorpe, impetuously, "can anything look worse for this young man? On the last occasion of his visit, you say, he made his way in the dusk to the library—exactly what he did to-night! What occasion was there for him to endeavour to see his father again, unless he were prompted by a spirit of revenge, and acted on malice prepense. Besides, there are two other points which I have not yet spoken about, but which I will now lay before you. In the first place, this fellow was lurking about here this morning in a sly, underhanded manner. I know that, for my horse shied at him, and as soon as he recognised me, he pulled his hat over his face and made off as fast as he could. And in the second place, when I mentioned the fact of my having seen him to Mrs. Picker-

ing—ah, you may well sigh, I am afraid this will be an awful blow to that poor dear woman—when I told Mrs. Pickering, whom Sir Geoffrey had, I believe, admitted into his fullest confidence, that I had seen this youth, she seemed very much agitated, and implored me to ride back as hard as I could, and induce the young man to go away. The words which she used struck me very much at the time, and I recollect them perfectly. ‘It is all-important that a meeting between them should be prevented,’ she said, showing plainly that she anticipated and wished to prevent a collision.”

“She will be able to tell us what she meant and what were her reasons for being thus urgent with you in a very short time now, I hope,” said Mr. Drage.

“I am not quite so clear about that,” said Cleethorpe. “She must have fallen with terrific force, and Chenoweth is as yet by no means certain that there is not concussion of the brain. What chance can have taken her there just at that moment? I am most anxious to hear her account of all she saw. My own impression is that she must have come suddenly upon the scene, and fainting away with horror, struck her head against the corner of the window as she fell.”

At this moment the butler opened the door and announced Mr. Drew.

Mr. Drew was the senior partner of a firm of solicitors in large practice at Springside, agents to the principal landed proprietors resident in the neighbourhood, and, as representing the English interest of the leading members of the Indian colony there located, correspondents of many legal practitioners in India, to whose interests a clerk was specially relegated. With criminal business Mr. Drew's firm had little or nothing to do; prosecutions for trespass, poaching, encroachments on right of way, and such like simple matters, they undertook as part and parcel of their land-agent practice, but all heavier cases they declined. In the present instance, however, Mr. Drew, having been sent for by the rector, who knew him to have been occasionally employed by Sir Geoffrey, made a point of attending in person, the London solicitors for whom Messrs. Drew and Dean acted as agents having specially requested that every attention might be paid to him; and the facts of the case, so far as Mr. Drew could collect them from several distinct and opposing narrations, promising to afford a certain amount of wholesome civil as well as criminal litigation.

Mr. Drew was a tall, white-haired, red-faced old gentleman, of portly presence and pleasing manners. One of his sons was in excellent practice at the parliamentary bar, and the other was a minor canon of Avonmouth Cathedral. His daughter was married to the eldest son of a baronet, and he himself was in receipt of an excellent income, so that he thought himself justified in classing himself with the county aristocracy, and spoke accordingly. The little pomposity noticeable in him in general society was, however, always mitigated when he found himself in company with Captain Cleethorpe, whose sharp caustic hints he was accustomed to speak of as “the language of the barracks.”

“This is a sad affair, Mr. Drage,” said the lawyer, after the first greeting had been exchanged, “very sad indeed! A great loss to the county society, poor Sir Geoffrey, man of military celebrity, and all that kind of thing. And what a dreadful weapon to place in the hands of the lower orders.”

“Weapon! lower orders! What do you mean, Mr. Drew?”

“Mean, my dear sir. Don't you see that in the desperate Radical times in which we live anything which gives the lower orders a chance of turning round upon their superiors is eagerly seized by them. There is not a Sunday paper throughout the kingdom that will not put forth flaming placards, ‘Murder of a baronet by his son.’ Our poor friend was not a baronet, but they don't know the difference, and would not mind if they did, as it makes such a good line in the bills.”

“That Sir Geoffrey Heriot is dead, is unfortunately too true,” said Mr. Drage, “but it has yet to be proved that he was murdered; and when that has been proved, comes the question, by whom?”

“Quite right, my dear sir, right in every particular. Doctor Chenoweth stopped me as I was driving out here, and told me there was some doubt as to the cause of death. But I explained to him the law on that point, which holds that—exactly—you know. Well then comes the question of identity; this young man was seized in the room, actually bending over the body. I looked in at the Guildhall as I passed, and the superintendent told me that his shirt-front and hands were stained with blood. What do we want more? Motive! That, oddly enough, I think we shall be able to prove!”

“You don't mean to say that Sir Geoffrey

ever took you into his confidence, Mr. Drew?" said Cleethorpe, turning upon the lawyer shortly.

"I really don't see why he should not have done so," retorted the old gentleman. "The private affairs of some of the oldest and noblest families in this country, sir, are in my keeping; and I have never heard any one accuse me of betrayal of confidence. However, as it happens on this occasion, the information I received was not from Sir Geoffry; indeed, it has only just come to my knowledge. This is not the first visit this young man has paid to his father since Sir Geoffry has resided at Springside."

"How on earth did you learn that?" said Captain Cleethorpe.

"In a perfectly proper and legitimate manner you may be sure," said Mr. Drew, his red face redder than ever with excitement.

"No one questions that for a moment, my dear sir," said the Rector, quietly, "but it seems odd that you should be aware of a circumstance which is not known in the household."

"Pardon me," said Mr. Drew, "it is known in the household; to two members of it at least. The fact is, my coachman is keeping company, as the lower orders call it, with a girl who is housemaid here. The coachman happened to be in town when the news of the murder arrived, and ran up here with all the rest of the people. Here he saw the girl, who reminded him that some weeks since she had told him, as she was one day passing through the passage, she had heard a loud contention of voices; the one being Sir Geoffry's, the other being that of a stranger in the library, during which the bell was rung violently; that she lingered to see the result, and finally saw Sir Geoffry's body-servant, Murphy, or some Irish name, which I cannot exactly recollect, show a young man to the door; that same young man she said she had just seen accused of the murder and taken away into custody."

"That, left uncontradicted, would be an important piece of evidence," said Mr. Drage.

"It is indeed!" said Mr. Drew. "But what do you mean by left uncontradicted? How could it be contradicted?"

"Suppose," said Mr. Drage, with hesitation, "suppose it could be proved that Sir Geoffry was sorry for having spoken to his son as he did on that occasion, that he

acknowledged the lad's goodness, and mentioned his intention of receiving him back, and——"

"My dear sir—my dear sir," interrupted Mr. Drew, "you can say all this to me, because I know your excellence of heart, and all that sort of thing; but if you were to talk in this way to Messrs. Moss and Moss, of Thavies Inn, London, whom I shall instruct to get up the case, they would laugh in your face! The idea of talking about proving our poor dear friend's intention. Facts, my dear sir, are what will go down in a case like this—facts, and nothing else!"

"Then you are not going to get up this case yourself, Mr. Drew?" asked the captain.

"No, I am not, Captain Cleethorpe," said the old lawyer. "I have had little or no practice, I am happy to say, in criminal business, and as this is a most important case, I shall instruct Messrs. Moss, who are certainly at the head of that branch of the profession. I telegraphed to them just now, and shall expect one of the partners down by the first train to-morrow morning. He will require to see all the witnesses, and this man Murphy, of whom we have just spoken."

"You mean Riley, Mr. Drew."

"Very likely, Captain Cleethorpe. I am not expected to remember the names of the servants of all my clients. However, Mr. Moss will require to see him, and above all Mrs. Pickering."

"I am sorry to say that Mrs. Pickering still remains in a state of unconsciousness," said Mr. Drage.

"That's bad," said the lawyer; "let us hope she will be better in the morning. I am very curious to hear what she has to say in this matter. Now, gentlemen, good-night. Mr. Moss will come straight to my office, and I will bring him up here at once."

Mr. Drew shook hands with the rector, bowed to Captain Cleethorpe, and took his departure. The other gentlemen were about to follow, when the butler presented himself and said, "That the young woman who had been sitting up with Mrs. Pickering had come to say that the lady had just opened her eyes and mentioned Mr. Drage's name, and hearing that he was in the house, she expressed a wish to see him immediately."

"I will come at once," said Mr. Drage, then muttered to himself, "Now I shall learn the truth in this horrible affair!"

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